

Dear Chairman Powell & FCC Board members

In April there was a poll that found a vast majority of Americans (over 70%) did not know about the changes to ownership rules. At a meeting of a local group of informed citizens here some did not know about the rule change, or what is the FCC and how it is organized. But they were worried about the implications of this change. How I became informed is through NPR & PBS, esp. Bill Moyer's program NOW, which one of the board members (Mr. Copps) appeared on last week probably to the ire of the other board members.

I did a search on the websites of the major broadcast news: ABC, NBC, CBS, CNN and a news search. What I have found is very little, one story on CBS, and print media there were many hits to progressive pages many but not in the mainstream press.

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I saw that Chairman Powell thinks by allowing greater market share ownership this would increase diversity. As someone who has given up on broadcast and cable news because they have reached a level of insipience previously mocked in sit-coms. How can allowing these companies to get larger increase diversity. Look at large media companies such as Clear Channel which programs a single show for distribution nationally, how does this promote diversity. In NW New Mexico we are three major groups (by language) English, Spanish & Navajo. Does a large media company like Clear Channel plan on broadcasting in Navajo? Do we here in NW NM have the same interest as people in TX? Well there is one thing about living here there is plenty of open space on our dials but what about large media markets where the dial is already full. If a single company is able to own a greater portion of the broadcast spectrum I don't see how that promotes diversity or local interest. Sure you can say there is diversity in programming like one plays country, another pop, one classic rock but what about classical music - always a long search on the dial. Then there is alternative views like Democracy Now, which I do not get here on my radio and do not see any prospect of it coming here unless I start my own radio station. Wow, diversity!! but not through larger media ownership of the airwaves rather LOCAL ownership.

So here are a few questions for you:

- would increasing the allowed share of market ownership increase or decrease the cost of broadcasting.
- would this lead to large media corporations buying up cheap

stations and holding them like real estate speculators?

- does the FCC have any plans to promote local low power broadcasters?

- any plans to increase reserved space for non-profit public interest broadcasting?

- Does the FCC have a fall back plan if this plan goes wrong and all there is on every station is the Dixie Chicks? Can you re-regulate without making a great mess then there already is?

- Will the FCC require broadcasters to disclose to their listeners how much of their broadcast across the dial is decided by them?

- Will the FCC look at equal access as the market evolves? Are there any brakes in this plan to insure that a minority group is not shut out of a market as media groups expand?

- Have you considered any of these questions?

- Do you care?

Richard Ferguson